

## **New Equipment for the Army**

The Army's "Big Five" program to provide more modern weapons and vehicles for the Army received Congressional support in the Fiscal Year 76 Defense Budget.

The Utility Tactical Transport Aircraft, replaces the UH 1 (Huey) and will provide assault helilift for a fully-equipped eleven-man squad in a tactical troop assault and related combat support. It was fully funded in the 76 budget. Current planning calls for selection of a final model between the two competing by late 1976.

The Advanced Attack Helicopter, will provide anti-tank, anti-vehicle, and anti-personnel support to infantry and armored units. The two-man aircraft will have a speed of 145-175 knots and be armed with an anti-tank missile and a 30mm cannon. Cuts in long-lead items in the 76 budget caused some program realignments, but prototype selection is still scheduled for late 76 and the production decision by early 1980. Both versions made their initial flights in late September.

The XM-1 Battle Tank will feature greatly improved armored protection, fire-power and cross-country mobility and agility. Prototype selection between the two US manufactured models is scheduled for mid-1976. The winner will then be evaluated against the German-designed Leopard tank later in the year. The program remains fully funded.

A new Mechanized Infantry Combat Vehicle will give the infantryman the capability of fighting mounted with armored protection and promises additional fire support when fighting dismounted. It will have the cross-country mobility to keep up with tank forces. It, too, received full funding in the FY 76 budget and operational testing with troops is expected to begin in the spring of 1976. First production is planned for early 1979.

SAM-D, a new surface-to-air missile system, is designed to provide medium to high altitude air defense for the Army in the field and will replace the Nike Hercules and the HAWK. The system was fully funded and is progressing well—in a recent series of tests, 8 out of 9 missile were successful in destroying their jet speed airborne targets. A decision to go into full engineering development is expected in January 76 and production should begin in 1980.

The "Big Five" represent the first major weapons systems developed for Army since before the Viet Nam war.